Shifting of HQ of the Office of Salt Commissioner

3112. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that a decision was taken in December, 1994 to shift the Head Quarter of the Office of Salt Commissioner from Jaipur to Gandhinagar (Gujarat); and

(b) if so, the details of actions taken by Government since then to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All India Salt Department Employees' Union challenged the decision of Government before the Hon'ble High Court, Rajasthan. The Hon'ble Court stayed the decision of shifting with order passed on 29.11.1994. The Government of Rajasthan and Gujarat impleaded themselves as interested parties. The Court in their order dated 04.10.2007 directed to have a re-look into the matter after consulting all stake holders. The judgment of the Hon'ble High Court is under implementation.

Relief package for exporters

3113. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of fresh relief package approved by Government for exporters;

(b) whether the new package is in addition to Rs. 300 crore announced by Government earlier;

(c) how the new relief package will help the exporters to achieve the export targets; and

(d) the details of sectors identified for the purpose for availing the package?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a)and (b) In the Annual Supplement to Foreign Trade Policy (RE 2008), following measures have been announced providing new package of relief measures to exporters to be made effective from 1.4.2008. (i) Extension of DEPB Scheme till 31.5.2009 and continuation of enhanced DEPB Rates beyond 31.3.2008. With effect from 1.4.2007, DEPB Rates were enhanced by 3% for 9 sectors and 2% for others with certain modifications subsequently; (ii) Income Tax benefit to 100% EOUs under Section 10B of IT Act extended for one more year, beyond 2009; (iii) Interest subvention provided last year to sectors affected by Rupee Appreciation and to SMEs, has been extended by one more year i.e. till 31.3.2009; (iv) Customs duty payable under EPCG Scheme has been reduced from 5% to 3% for all sectors. It will boost technology upgradation and capacity expansion at a relatively lower cost. Further, there would be reduced average export obligation under EPCG Scheme, for sectors, which have witnessed decline in exports, in the previous years; (v) Service Tax Notification No. 17/2008 issued on 1.4.2008 allowing refund of service tax paid by exporters on 3 more taxable services. This will be applicable for all exporting sectors; (vi) Procedure for payment of interest @6% per annum laid down in case of delay in